

Prabuddha Bharata

Arise! Awake! and stop not till the goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda

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Manager's Notice

PRABUDDHA BHARATA goes to its readers this month with new features.

Its content has been increased by two new pages and enlargement of its columns.

The fresh varieties of reading matter introduced are :

“Occasional Notes” by the Editor.

The Sanskrit page, generally a beautiful hymn or a devotional passage from the Shastras, with English translation.

Extracts from the English Literature : passages from the writings of masters or notes about them, and usually a high-class poem.

Some space (not more than two columns) will be devoted every issue to queries and answers by readers (for fuller statement see Q. & A. page).

The subscription price remains the same. It is hoped these efforts to

improve the paper will meet with the approval of the readers. While the conductors will try to keep up these features and endeavour to introduce other improvements from time to time, their attempt is necessarily only an experimental one. They cannot afford to pay for contributed articles. On the other hand, the cost of publication of PRABUDDHA BHARATA at Mayavati, 60 miles from the nearest Railway Station, with not even a cart road leading from it, is very great.

The manager therefore solicits contributions from such readers as are conversant with subjects treated in these pages and appeals that each subscriber may find another subscription, as without such co-operation a paper like PRABUDDHA BHARATA, with a necessarily limited circle of readers, cannot be efficiently conducted.

OCCASIONAL NOTES

THE supremest concern of the highest Indian thought and culture had always been the other world as is evident in the ordering of all social and individual conduct. If there was a conflict of interests between this world and the next, whether real or fanciful, we know what had to go to the wall. This is accepted almost as a truism, but what is not so accepted, though none the less true, is the fact that the concerns of this world have unduly suffered, without bringing any gain anywhere, from an indiscriminate application of the other-world-concern principle to life.

Disuse causes atrophy. This law holds good in all planes of activity and existence, whether physical, mental or spiritual. If the powers of the mind are not directed to the concerns of this world, those same powers will not develop and in time will get atrophied so far as their this-worldly sides are concerned, as had been the case with the ancient Hindus. And since nothing left to itself—nothing left drifting—can progress, the concerns of this world failed to prosper in the Hindu India of the past.

What an easy prey India had always been to her foreign invaders! Why? Because she was always found more inferiorly organised in this-worldly concerns by each one of them. To say nothing of purely material matters, take the semi-religious semi-social caste system. It flourished luxuriantly so long as no foreign power entered India. But it began to crumble away as soon as the moral pressure of an alien culture was brought to bear upon it; so that though never yet subjected to positive persecution, it has been reduced to a wreck, its constitution—the

division of professions according to *varna*—having broken altogether, with the single exception of the priestly duties.

The impact of the world-conquering worldly civilisation of the West has brought the extent and meaning of this inferiority of organisation vividly and poignantly home to the hearts of all thoughtful Indians. Nor are signs lacking of a widespread though as yet unorganised movement throughout the country to cover lost ground in this direction. Even the least observant cannot fail to see that a reaction has set in. Indeed with a considerable section of our educated countrymen this-worldly concerns bid fair to be what the other worldly concerns were to their ancient forefathers. The pendulum has swung to the other extreme—an inevitable contingency in a period of transition.

The question naturally arises therefore, what place shall religion or spirituality have in this national awakening for a national adjustment? The model after which our present national sentiment is seeking to mould itself is distinctly Western; and we know the Western national ideal is not spiritual in spite of what Mr. Benjamin Kidd has to say to the contrary. We recognise a standard of utilitarian morality has been evolved in the West, which has nothing to do with religion or spirituality, but which at the same time does not shape national ends. So far it has been able to influence the individual alone; it finds no voice in national concerns. Many of our enlightened and patriotic countrymen would like to have this morality in connexion with the national sentiment instead of religion, as they hold, not without reason, that religion

cannot offer a common platform, a national basis to a many-creeded people like the Indians.

We know there can be national efficiency without spirituality. But do we not also know that a national greatness which rears itself even on utilitarian morality, which is practically but another name for the exploitation of other nations, whose motive power is a narrow, sordid self-interest, has evanescence branded on its forehead? A nation or a race of men is a part of the organic whole mankind. A part however efficient for the time being, which lives at the expense of the whole, which is out of adjustment with the whole, which is inimical to the best interests of the whole, is sure to go to pieces by the recoil when sooner or later the whole asserts its organic integrity. We are taught that the whole of nature is the diverse expression of an underlying Unity: an organic unity is evident in each of the great divisions of nature, man, brute, bird, tree &c. Does it require much insight to perceive that if a part of an organism is out of harmony with the rest, it is in a diseased condition and by an inherent necessity, the organism will rid itself of the part for the good of the whole?

There can be no endurance without spiritual adjustment. That to be really good, harmonious and permanent an ideal or a system must be centred in spirituality. Divested of their sensuous accretions all things are at bottom One: the demands of the sensuous nature, the promptings of the flesh make for selfishness and narrowness. Spirituality is the consciousness of the fundamental basic Unity. The more spiritual any thing is, the less is its identification with the promptings of its lower nature, with its inferior particularised self-interest.

Nothing is so shortlived as flesh and its

energies. Therefore the less there is of flesh, of sense-fever, of sordid self-seeking in a constitution, the more stable it is bound to be. Untouched by the mad whirl of fleeting passions, ephemeral sense-cravings and unstable self-interests, spirituality is the only enduring state and gives endurance to all things which can adjust themselves to its constitution. The interests of spirituality are always broad and comprehensive as those of its opposite are narrow and cramping. Being the reverse of selfish it is the soul of harmony, therefore it is the really good and the truly noble.

Spirituality is much more than morality. Morality is only a phase of spirituality, an expression. Spirituality is the open door to the divinity in man, the means of perennial inspiration and strength, the conduit of eternal hope and peace.

We grow from within. All strength, all peace, all excellence is within. What we get from without are merely suggestions to call up the sleeping powers within. Dependence on one's Self, assertion of one's Self, unfoldment of one's Self, is the goal. This is the message of spirituality. Conduct which is consistent with the belief that the same Self is the essence of every being and every state everywhere is spiritual conduct. Bringing about a state of things by which every individual is enabled to realise his Self, to unfold his highest and best is the mission of the spiritual civilisation. And its motive power is that noble ever-expanding larger Self-interest which cannot exploit the weak because it is suicidal, and helps every section of humanity with what it lacks, as an integral part of its own organism. Shall we Indians knowing these facts and possessing these ideals satisfy ourselves with the adoption of an unspiritual culture which falls so far short of perfection in our estimation? Can we do it?

India had not been able in the past to develop the spiritual civilisation which is the logical outcome of the Vedantic system of life. The times are changed and in the broad survey of the world's thought it is found that the Vedanta is the one system which furnishes a common platform of spirituality to all religions and forms the true basis of a national sentiment and national action for national growth and prosperity in all lines. Let Indians, now that they clearly perceive the

need of a greater social and economical efficiency to hold their own, strive to organize themselves into a nation, great in science, art and industry, which, broad-based on spirituality and equipped with all the physical knowledge and power of the modern West, would use them not to exploit the weak, not for its own smaller, shortlived self-interest, but for the amelioration of the condition of man and restoring him his true status—Divinity, even here on earth.

CONCERNING IDEALS

To those who are early drawn into the whirlpool of life, what battle, courage, and persistence are required to maintain their ideals. They see people affected by the deleterious influences around them, yielding to the clamorous appeals of the senses, and pursuing pleasure—which in too many instances becomes the sum total of existence. There is nothing so important for us as to resolve to have an ideal, and be zealous followers of the same. It will restore our perspective, correct our vision, so that we see things in their right proportion. A man, to be of value, to be true to himself, must hold to an ideal; he must be able to think beyond his work and precedent, and have power to show in the line of life he has chosen, in what his heart is centred. He will then be able to wrestle more intelligently with the problems of life as presented in his daily round.

The ideal should be for the inspiration, direction and organisation of our moral, social, intellectual and religious forces, and this unwavering ideal having come under our observation, we should be able to turn to our advantage the qualities to which it gives rise or that it comprises. The fundamental principle of the ideal is to bridge the chasm of life,

making it possible not merely to fix a rule of conduct, but bring about a revolution in one's life, absolutely inconceivable before. Ideals are full of the deepest meanings, assertions of new beauties, incentives to fresh endeavours, demanding devotion of the human mind to all that is noble and untried. They appear radiant with suggestive wisdom and full of rare excellence. Things that seem permanent and final become unsettled and provisional in their light for they provide other standpoints. They must be judged as they conduce more or less, according to the qualitative and quantitative advance due to their influence, towards a higher and ampler standard of life.

The loyal, cool qualities indispensable to the carrying out of our ideals must be impregnated with love, gentleness, and forethought, in touch with the best conceptions of the day, disclaiming at the same time any illiberality regarding the ideals of others. They will thus prove a world-power in a spiritual sense, a pacificator among men of all creeds.

The same spirit illumines diverse natures, and the most various and the most different can assimilate similar ideals, with the differences necessitated by their natures

and their interior aptitudes, and it is this unity and this variety which, in their true reality, realise the Supreme Principle. Without this spiritual understanding we shall fail to deepen our knowledge, for the things of the intellect may become either a help or a hindrance to the attainment of our ideals. Therefore, let us listen to the voice within, and try to rouse this sense of knowledge which lies dormant in each one of us. Its chosen soil is the pure heart, and we shall do well to ponder over the ever-recurring suggestions of our reflective and serious moods, and seek to enlarge the spiritual vision to the perception of something of the infinite. We cannot hope to realise our ideals if the mind conforms to any worthless inclinations, for in order to make our labours fruitful we must be conscious of our inherent pure nature. Beyond all else in the world, ideality demands an invincible strength and an indomitable energy—it must never be allied to weakness.

We perceive then, that to grasp our ideals is no easy task to be undertaken lightly, seeing that they involve a vast change in ourselves. Consequently we must never slacken in our pursuit of them. Spasmodic efforts in this or that direction will be of no avail until we have been brought to acknowledge that there is a definite and wisely-ordered purpose in our aims. They should also not be irreconcilable with practical work, though we have misgivings, grope about, now and then start off in the wrong direction, oftentimes discouraged, or again gloomy fears brood over our resolutions and longings. Only a few can retain the ideals with sufficient firmness to apply them consistently at all seasons, but a false step, or failure of application is of no more consequence here than in other paths of life. "The circumference of our life need not impede the centre, neither need the centre be any restraint on the circumference." External activity is in itself only the shadow of the profound life which has its source in the Self—therefore, it is

possible to participate in the contemplative and the active aspects of life. There is much that is good and beneficial in the interchange of activity and retirement. As activity sweetens retirement, so retirement prepares the mind for renewed activity and reinforces the springs of inward cognition.

From a man's aspirations, one receives a very significant hint of the inner ideal, his moral worth being directly proportional to its lights. First and foremost the truth one strives for, is the truth one grows into, that pervades our consciousness, rather than something that manifests itself to the outer world—a perception whereby the eyes of the soul are unsealed.

Our great thoughts, the truths of our lives must never quit us. Our convictions will be a resistless potency to spur us on to unlimited self-sacrifice for the ideal that possesses us, a devotion to it making straight for the goal firmly and calmly under its disciplinary influence.

To take the spiritual ideal, quiet and meditation will lead us much further than we had thought possible, and noting the immensity of that power, we shall ask ourselves how it had been gained by the old Rishis in their mountain solitudes. We believe that they were nearer the solution of the mysteries of life than we are, just because they recognised spiritual purity as higher than intellectual development. Far back in the traditions of humanity there exist deep echoes of these saints, which are re-awakened at a touch. It is surely worth while to contemplate those things that have been bequeathed to us, and to recall to the memory of men the ideals which so seldom arrest their attention. In regard to these holy ones, the false interpretation and the foolish reproach of selfishness and uselessness falls naturally from the lips of detractors, who are unfitted to judge impartially on their merits, and who study them without comprehending

them. No one perhaps can quite appreciate the strength of their feelings, who has not lived the life of a recluse, and freed himself for a length of time from the world and its thousand binding littlenesses. We are almost astonished to find that men of such austere simplicity should have been competent to grapple with stupendous philosophic ideals, forgetting "that concentration is to thought, what heat is to the plant." They steadily directed their attention towards the Self, and their philosophy strove to inculcate in them a contempt for human happiness and all the vanities of this world. Contemplating the Eternal, their keenness of vision, in this way, became strong in spiritual perceptions, and detachment from material environments obtained for them the supreme Self-light, and the most exquisite purity of soul. Thus, these consecrated beings, in whom the tremendous growth of religious ideas entered, helped to reveal to mankind their divine origin.

When we revert to the world, we forget ourselves from the point of view of that which is real, seeking and finding ourselves from the point of view of that which is false. It lures us with Utopias, soothes us with fallacious expectations, pandering to our fancies and foibles, and offering dead sea-fruits for our acceptance. So much for the fragility of earthly bliss! The realisation of the real even in part is nothing less than a spiritual realisation, and demonstrates how we can become conscious of our Self. We shall then discover ourselves again, as though we had regained a part of ourselves that was essential and unknown, in which the passions of life have been hushed to a perpetual silence, and our will coalesced in that of Him, who is all in all. We should cling with all our might to this transcendent, penetrative life, having that spiritual virility that appeals to the high Self and subtly exalts life by ministering to the cravings of the God-nature, for in it we shall attain what we can attain nowhere else. Our

life is crowned by breathing this rarefied air of benediction and revelation, for "the soul is still oracular" and by communing with the spirit that quickens, we enter into the secret place of the Most High, winning that holy peace, which is the greatest joy of an illumined soul at one with Itself.

ADVAITIN

The world of the Infinite is not open to us until everything less than the Infinite may go, so we possess it. Always is there a price to be paid for knowledge; always is there a price to be paid for power, for strength, for wisdom, for ability to overcome and establish our dominion. If we think we shall receive it for nothing we reckon without our host. This is the law operative in creation from beginning to end.

So many times we have failed to receive what we sought and we do not always see that the reason why was in ourselves. We were trying to get something for nothing; trying to get what we desired without paying the price for it; trying and longing to have all poured into our laps as passive receivers. Nowhere in the industrial, in the everyday world, nor in the spiritual world, do we, or should we, obtain something for nothing. Always the price. When we are ready to pay the price we shall attain that which we desire.—*Selected.*

All that hath been majestic
In life or death, since time began,
Is native in the simple heart of all,
The angel heart of man.

... ..
Nor is he far astray who deems
That every hope, which rises and grows
In the world's heart by ordered impulse,
streams broad
From the great heart of God.

—James Russell Lowell.

A HYMN TO THE DIVINE MOTHER

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

अम्बास्तोत्रम्,

स्वामिविवेकानन्दविरचितम्,

का त्वं शुभे शिवकरे सुखदुःखहस्ते
 आघूर्णितं भवजलं प्रबलोर्मिभङ्गैः ।
 शान्तिं विधातुमिह किं बहुधा विभग्नम्,
 मातः प्रयत्नपरमासि सदैव विश्वे ॥

संपादयत्यविरतं अविरामवृत्ता
 या वै स्थिता कृतफलं अकृतस्य नेत्री ।
 सा मे भवत्वनुदिनं वरदा भवानी
 जानाम्यहं ध्रुवमिदं धृतकर्मपाशा ॥

कोवा धर्मः किमकृतं कः कापाललेखः
 किवादृष्टं फलमिहास्ति हि यद्विना भोः ।
 इच्छापाशैर्नियमिता नियमाः स्वतन्त्रैः
 यस्या नेत्री भवतु सा शरणं ममाद्या ॥

सन्तानयन्ति जलधिं जनिमृत्युजालं
 सम्भावयन्त्यविकृतं विकृतं विभग्नम् ।
 यस्या विभूतय इहामितशक्तिपालाः
 नाश्रित्य तां वद कुतः शरणं ब्रजामः ॥

मित्रे शत्रौ अविषमं तव पद्मनेत्रम्,
 स्वस्थे दुःस्थे त्ववितथं तव हस्तपातः ।
 मृत्युच्छाया तव दया अमृतञ्च मातः
 मा मां मुञ्चन्तु परमेशुभदृष्टयस्ते ॥

TRANSLATION :--

THOU beautiful, pleasure and pain in thy hands, doer of the good, by whom is whirled the water of existence, tossed into mighty waves, who art thou? O mother, is it to restore in this universe the harmony, broken in many ways, that thou art again always so busily engaged?

May the mother of the universe, the ever active, who is ceaselessly dispensing the fruits of actions done and is the guide of actions yet to come, bestow blessings ever on me. I know for certain you hold the ropes of Karma in your hands.

Is it inherent nature, or something uncreate, or destiny, or some unforeseen result, without which, they say, nothing is accountable? Whose untrammelled will controls the laws, may she, the primal guide, be my shelter.

Whose manifestations are the powers of immeasurable might in the universe—powers who swell the ocean of birth and death, who change and break up the unchanged, say, where shall we take refuge but in her?

Even are thy lotus-eyes to friend and foe; the touch of thy hand is fruitful alike to the fortunate and the unfortunate; immortality and the shadow of death, O mother, are both thy grace. Thou supreme, may thy gracious look be never turned away from me.

कवाम्बा सर्व्वा क्व गृणनं मम हिनबुद्धेः
 धर्तुं दोष्यमिव मतिर्जगदेकधाश्रीम् ।
 श्रीमश्चिन्त्यं सुचरणं अभयप्रतिष्ठम्,
 सेवासारैरभिनुतं शरणं प्रपद्ये ॥

या मामाजन्म विनयत्यतिदुःखमार्गैः
 आ संसिद्धेः स्वकलितैर्ललितैर्विलासैः ।
 या मे बुद्धिं सुविदधे सततं धरयाम्,
 साम्बा सर्व्वा मम गतिः सफलेऽफले वा ॥

What thou art, the mother, the all, and what thy praise by me of little understanding ! It is like the desire to seize the sole supporter of the universe with two hands. To thy blessed feet, contemplated by all that is good, the abode of fearlessness, worshipped by the highest service, I seek refuge.

Who has been leading me towards perfection since birth through the path of grim adversity in her own sweet playful ways, who has always inspired my understanding, she, the mother, the all, is my resort in success or failure.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

JNANA AND BHAKTI—III

THE Jnana Yogi says, 'I am He.' But so long as there is the idea of the self as body, this egoism is injurious. It cannot make one progress and brings ruin. He deceives himself and others.

My Divine Mother (the Personal phase of Brahman) has declared She is the Brahman of the Vedanta. It is within Her power to give Brahma-jnana which She does by causing the effacement of the lower self.

Thus in the first place you may come unto Brahman through Vichara, my Mother willing. Again you may come through Bhakti. Prayer without ceasing for light and for love, self-surrender to Her are the elements of Bhakti. First come to my Divine Mother (the Personal God) through these.

Take my word for it that if your prayer is *antarika* (comes from the bottom of your heart), my Mother shall respond to it, if you will only *wait*. Pray to Her again if you want to realise Her Impersonal Self. Should She deign to grant your prayer—for She is omnipotent—you would be in a position to

realise Her Impersonal Self in Samadhi. This is precisely the same thing as Brahma-jnana.

SUPPOSE there is an infinite expanse of water—water above, water beneath, water in all directions. At certain parts the water freezes in the cold and again it thaws when it is hot and becomes water.

Brahman is this infinite expanse of water. The portions of this water which are frozen into ice are the spiritual Personal Forms of the Deity. The cold is the Bhakti of the devotee, his love, his devotion, his self-surrender. The heat again is *Jnana-Vichara*, (discrimination between the real and the unreal phenomenal universe) leading up to *nirvikalpa samadhi*, the total effacement of the self which says "I" "I."

To a Bhakta the Lord manifests Himself in various forms. To a person that reaches the height of Brahma-jnana in Samadhi, He is the Nirguna Brahman once more, nirakara (formless) Unconditioned.

Herein is the reconciliation between Jnana and Bhakti.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Extracts

VIII

29th September 1894

Dear—

You need not be sorry, my son, on account of the young men becoming Christians. What else can they be under the existing social bondages? Especially in Madras. Liberty is the first condition of growth. Your ancestors gave every liberty to the soul, and religion grew. They put the body under every bondage and society did not grow. Opposite is the case in the West—every liberty to society, none to religion. Now are falling down the shackles from the feet of the Eastern society as from those of Western religion.

Each again will have its type, the religious or introspective in India, the scientific or out-seeing in the West. The West wants every bit of spirituality through social improvement. The East wants every bit of social power through spirituality. Thus it was that the modern reformers saw no way to reform but by first crushing out the religion of India. They tried and they failed. Why? Because few of them ever studied their own religion and not *one* ever *underwent* the training necessary to understand the *mother of all religions*. I claim that no destruction of religion is necessary to improve the Hindu society, and that this state of society exists not on account of the religion, but because that religion has not been applied to society as it should have been. This I am ready to prove from our old books, every word of it. This is what I teach and this is what we must struggle all our lives to carry out. But it will take time, a long time to study. Have patience and work. उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानम्, save yourself by yourself.

Yours &c.,
VIVEKANANDA

IX

CHICAGO, 23rd June 1894

Your Highness,

Sri Narayana bless you and yours. Through your Highness' kind help, it has been possible for me to come to this country. Since then I have become well-known here and the hospitable people of this country have supplied all my wants. It is a wonderful country and this is a wonderful nation in many respects. No other nation applies so much machinery in their everyday work as do the people of this country. Everything is machine. Then again they are only one-twentieth of the whole population of the world. Yet they have fully one-sixth of the wealth of the world. There is no limit to their wealth and luxuries. Yet everything here is so dear. The wages of labour are the highest in the world; yet the fight between labour and capital is constant.

Nowhere on earth women have so many privileges as in America. They are slowly taking everything into their hands and strange to say, the number of cultured women is much greater than that of cultured men. Of course the higher geniuses are mostly from the rank of males. With all the criticism of the Westerns against our caste, they have a worse one—that of money. The almighty dollar, as the Americans say, can do anything here.

Your Highness cannot realise without seeing how eagerly they take in any little bit of the grand thought of the holy Vedas which can resist and harmonise with the terrible onslaughts of modern science. The theories of creation out of nothing, of a created soul, and of the big tyrant of a God sitting on a throne in a place called heaven, and of the

eternal hell fires have disgusted all the educated, and the noble thoughts of the Vedas about the eternity of creation and of the soul and about the God in our own soul, they are imbibing fast in one shape or other. Within fifty years the educated of the world would come to believe in the eternity of both soul and creation and in God as *our* highest and perfect nature as taught in our holy Vedas. Even now their learned priests are interpreting the Bible that way. My conclusion is, that they require more spiritual civilization and we more material.

The one thing that is at the root of all evils in India is the condition of the poor. The only service to be done for our lower classes, is to give them education, *to develop their lost individuality*. That is the great task between our people and princes. Up to now nothing has been done in that direction. Priest power and foreign conquest have sadden them down for centuries and at last the poor of India have forgotten that they are human beings. They are to be given ideas; their eyes are to be opened to what is going on in the world around them, and then they will work their own salvation. Every nation, every man, every woman, must work one's own salvation. Give them ideas—that is the only help they require and then the rest must follow as the effect. Ours is to put the chemicals together, the crystalization comes in the law of nature. Our duty is to put ideas into their heads, they will do the rest. This is what is to be done in India. It was this idea that had been in my mind for a long time. I could not accomplish it in India and that was the reason of my coming to this country. The great difficulty in the way of educating the poor is this. Supposing even your Highness opens a free school in every village, still it would do no good, for the poverty in India is such that the poor boys would rather go to help their fathers in the field or otherw try to make a living

than come to the school. Now if the mountain does not come to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain. If the poor boy cannot come to education, education must go to him. There are thousands of single-minded, self-sacrificing Sannyasis in our own country, going from village to village, teaching religion. If a part of them can be organised as teachers also of secular things, they will go from place to place, from door to door, not only preaching but teaching also. Suppose two of these men go to a village in the evening with a camera, a globe, some maps, etc. They can teach a great deal of astronomy and geography to the ignorant. By telling stories about different nations they can give the poor a hundred times more information through the ear than they can get in a lifetime through books. This requires an organization which again means money. It is greatly difficult to set a wheel in motion but when once set, it goes on with increasing velocity. After seeking help in my own country and failing to get any sympathy from the rich, I came over to this country through your Highness' aid. The Americans do not care a bit whether the poor of India die or live. And why should they, when our own people never think of anything but their own selfishness? My noble prince, this life is short, the vanities of the world are transient, but they alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive. One such high, noble-minded and royal son of India as your Highness can do much towards raising India on her feet again and thus leave a name to posterity which shall be worshipped. May the Lord make your noble heart feel intensely for the suffering millions of India sunk in ignorance is the prayer of

VIVEKANANDA

To the Maharaja of—

Q. & A.

QUERIES AND ANSWERS

These two columns are set apart for the use of readers. Any one can send queries and answers. As the object of starting this page is to afford an opportunity to our readers for mutual help and co-operation in removing each other's doubts and for sharing the benefit of each other's thoughts and studies, the Editor does not propose to answer any queries but invites the readers to send in answers to all queries. The answers must be direct and short and only the best shall be published. Each answer should bear the number of the query to which it is a reply. All queries and answers should be addressed to the Editor, with the initials Q. & A. in a corner of the envelope. Correspondents must send their full names and addresses, not necessarily for publication. They should write on one side of the paper only, and use a separate sheet for each query or answer.

QUERIES

1. What is true renunciation?—W. T. R.
2. Is Vedanta pessimistic?—I. V. P.
3. How does image-worship help spiritual realisation?—H. D. S.
4. Can early marriage have a place in a society the object of which is the development of spirituality?—C. E. M.

REFERENCE WANTED

5. Will any reader of P. B. kindly tell me in the commentary of what Upanishad by Shankara and exactly where does the following definition of the Infinite occur :

यद्धि न कुतश्चित्, प्रविभज्यते तदनन्तम् ?

—A. O. B.

6. Can any of your readers refer me to the lecture of Swami Vivekananda in which he compares the competition to get on in the world to the rush to get out from a theatre in which a fire has broken out—an unnecessary struggle fraught with evil?—Y. L.

MORALITY

We cannot kindle when we will
The fire which in the heart resides,
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides.
But tasks in hours of insight will'd
Can be through hours of gloom fulfill'd.

With aching hands and bleeding feet
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone ;
We bear the burden and the heat
Of the long day, and wish 'twere done.
Not till the hours of light return,
All we have built do we discern.

Then, when the clouds are off the soul,
When thou dost bask in Nature's eye,
Ask, how *she* view'd thy self-control,
Thy struggling, task'd morality—
Nature, whose free, light, cheerful air,
Oft made thee, in thy gloom, despair.

And she, whose censure thou dost dread,
Whose eye thou wast afraid to seek,
See, on her face a glow is spread,
A strong emotion on her cheek !
"Ah, child !" she cries, "That strife divine,
Whence was it, for it is not mine ?

"There is no effort on *my* brow—
I do not strive, I do not weep ;
I rush with the swift spheres a-glow
In joy, and when I will, I sleep.
Yet that severe, that earnest air,
I saw, I felt it once—but where ?

"I knew not yet the gauge of time,
Nor wore the manacles of space ;
I felt it in some other clime,
I saw it in some other place.
'Twas when the heavenly house I trod,
And lay upon the breast of God."

—*Matthew Arnold.*

THE HOLY ROLLERS

FRENZIED ACTS OF A NEW RELIGIOUS SECT

"BE it as God directs."

With these words on their lips the fanatical men, women, and children who constitute the strange religious sect of "Holy Rollers," in the state of Oregon, throw upon the flames household goods, and even sacrifice their pet dogs and cats.

"Be it as God directs" they also answered to the grave charge that their prophet, "John the Baptist," reincarnated, was preparing to offer to the altar's flames one of his most devoted followers, a young girl, Miss Matilda Johnson. And the girl, when officers of the law asked her if it were true that she was to be sacrificed, answered with bowed head:—"Be it as God directs."

When the rumour gained general circulation that a young girl was to be offered as a sacrifice, police officers repaired to the temple of the sect. Admission was at first denied them, but they were not to be defeated, and rushed past the doorkeeper. The prophet promptly made his appearance and inquired the cause of the disturbance. When informed that all in the building were wanted by the law and were under arrest, he made no protest. The visitors were ushered into the apartment. The scene impressed them in spite of themselves.

Disciples were lying about on the floor, on mats, cots, blankets, hides, and other places of rest remarkable for their crudeness. No furniture graced the room, and the worshippers had assumed various positions to offer up prayers and otherwise declare their devotion to God.

One young girl—she who it was reported

was to be sacrificed—appeared to be in a trance or suffering a spasm. A large white cloth covered her face. The officer stepped over to remove it, when instantly all in the room cried out at the top of their voices, "Don't touch her; she is communing with God."

The officer asked the girl if she knew she had been selected as a subject for sacrifice. She replied in the negative, and added, "If God so wills, such a death would be joy."

Close beside the girl, with his head almost touching hers on the pillows, was the prophet. The questions addressed to the girl were then put to him.

"God's will be done," was all he would say.

Requested to explain the meaning of the cloth over the girl's face, and the nature of their devotions, he replied—"We are receiving a revelation from God as to our future."

Pressed to answer whether God had ordered that the girl by his side be sacrificed, he said "He has not yet, but if He should, His will be done. We know no law of man."

Pressed still further as to whether he deemed such a command probable, he would only say—"It is in God's hands; His will be done."

The officers, realising that their mission had failed, hauled the leaders, Creffield and Brooks, into court on a charge of insanity. Their discharge by the court has left them at liberty to continue their strange devotions unmolested—until the watching officers of the law gain evidence that a human sacrifice is actually in preparation.

After the dismissal of the insanity case, the citizens threatened violence, and some of the leaders fled, but only to remain away for a few days. Their return was the occasion for a grand jubilee by the adherents of the new religion, whose faith and zeal were reinforced when the leaders, with great solemnity, declared—

"God bade us return. Human beings cannot harm us."

The effect of this declaration was electrical. All the faithful assembled in the evening before a flat rock near their temple, which the prophet had proclaimed an altar of special sacrifice. A fire was built upon the altar, and behind it stood the prophet with rapt countenance and arms upraised, alternately praying and exhorting his followers.

These fanatical followers had brought before the altar what remained of their furniture and cherished personal effects. As the flames rose, the prophet spoke—

"Subjugate all lustful desires. All that has price contaminates the spirit and hinders communion with God."

"Be it as God directs!" chanted the followers.

A young and handsome woman threw upon the flames the mark of her vanity—a mirror in a carved frame. Men and women followed her with all manner of household fixtures and goods—even the beds upon which they were accustomed to sleep.

"All, all to the flames!" exhorted the prophet. "To the flames with all these agencies of evil!"

"Be it as God directs," answered his disciples, whose excitement had become intense.

The blazing altar was heaped with furniture and clothing. A young girl fed the fire with her dearest possession, a mandolin. A young man sacrificed his guitar. Two pillars of the church came with a small melodeon, which the flames destroyed amid prayers and shouts.

At this stage the emotions of several women had overcome them. They fell upon the ground, and then began a detail of the sect's religious practices previously performed, only behind barred doors. Shouting and praying, the women rolled over and over on the ground in front of the altar. Gradually other women and men joined them.

Suddenly what had been really impressive became frightful. A faithful house dog, whining and struggling in the master's arms, was stunned by a blow and thrown into the midst of the flames. Pet cats had the same fate—even a bird in its cage.

Children sacrificed their toys without urging. One mite of a girl kissed her rag doll and threw it upon the blazing altar.

The prophet, seen through the smoke with his arms upraised, completely dominated every mind and body there.

The mode of ordinary worship of this strange sect consists largely of shouting, singing, screaming, and other actions which denote a greatly perturbed state of mind. While some sing, others roll about on the floor, giving vent to blood-curdling yells. When they tire of this the prophet takes the floor, reads a few passages of Scripture, and if his disciples still show weariness he holds communion with God. Then the shouting, singing, and screaming is renewed.

Their weird rites continue, and near the house in which the ordinary services are held, behind barred doors, the prophet has built a tent, into which none but himself dares set foot, for in this tent is the sacred receptacle containing the "holy rolls" upon which God has directed to be written the names of the elect.

Among the members of this sect are people who have always been known as sound of mind and of good business sagacity.

—*The Weekly Scotsman.*

REVIEW

HINDU SOCIAL PROGRESS

SOCIAL reform movements, conducted without adequate sociological knowledge, bear in them the germs of serious danger to society. With the object of supplying this vitally important knowledge in regard to the Hindu society, Mr. N. Subbarau Pantulu Garu, B. A., B. L., has reprinted in the book,† *Hindu Social Progress*, several important papers from the columns of the Madras bimonthly, *The Indian Progress*. They are (1) What Indian Progress aims at, (2) Progress, (3) Hindu Social Reform on National Lines, (4) Some Characteristics of Social Progress, (5) The Efficiency of Hindu Civilization, (6) Imitation or Adaptation, (7) The Mission of the Pandit and (8) The Ideal in Education by Prof. M. Rangachariar, M. A., (9) The Aims of Hindu Social Life, (10) Social Reform and the Spiritual Ideal of Life, (11) Religion as the Basis of Social Reform and (12) The Method of Indian Social Reform by Mr. N. Ramanujachariar, M. A., (13) The Method of Social Reform by Dewan Bahadur R. Raghunatha Row, (14) Hindu Social Reform by Mr. K. Sudarsana Row, B.A., (15) Education as an Instrument of Social Reform by Mr. S. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar, M. A., M. R. A. S., (16) Renunciation and Reform by Mr. T. V. Seshagri Aiyar, B. A., B. L., (17) Courage of Conviction by Mr. A. Subramaniya Aiyar, B. A., L. T., (18) Woman's Life in the Arya Home by Prof. K. Sundararama Aiyar, M. A. (19) Sanskrit Learning in India by Mahamahopadhyaya Hara Prasad Sastri, M. A., and (20) Rama-

krishna Paramahansa by Mr. G. Venkataranga Row, M. A. The Appendix A contains in short the opinions on Social Reform of the late Justice Ranade, the Hon. Justice Sir Subramania Aiyar, the Hon. Justice Sir V. Bhashiam Aiyangar, Babu Norendra Nath Sen, Rai Bahadur Lala Baij Nath, the late Justice Muthuswami Aiyar and the late Rajah Sir T. Madhava Rao, and the Appendix B the aims and objects of the Madras Hindu Association and the speeches of Prof. Rangachariar and Mrs. Besant delivered at its inaugural meeting. The book aims to explain the basic principles of the organization of the Hindu society and to indicate the correct methods of work by which further advancement in social progress is to be effectively achieved. As the treatment of all the papers is impossible within the short compass of a review, we shall notice in particular the typical paper, "Hindu Social Reform," by Mr. K. Sudarsana Row.

We may state here at once that appreciate as we do the labours of the 'symptomatic' reformers, we do not believe much in the great efficacy of their method of reforming this or that social evil. We look upon social evils as diseases of the body of the society. Make that body healthy and strong by nourishing it with food and education and the diseases will disappear of themselves. Growth, to be permanent, must be from within; why, real growth is always from within. Unless the vast masses forming the Hindu society learn to solve their own problems and themselves make efforts for progress, we do not think permanent and real good will come out of the efforts of only a particular section of

† G. A. Natesan & Co., Esplanade, Madras, 1904, 8¼ × 5¼, pp. 227. Price Re. One.

society. Again, the tyranny of the few is the worst tyranny. If the few, however educated and well-meaning, succeed in forcing their culture upon the many, they do it by destroying, at least without allowing full play to, the powers of independent thought and action of the rest. The result is that the many, blindly led by the few, fall with the fall of the few. How our masses, blindly led by the priests, have fallen with the fall of the latter is an instance of this. We therefore consider him to be the greater social reformer, who, instead of declaiming against and trying to suppress particular social evils, strives to improve the health of the social organism by finding food and education for the hungry and ignorant masses.

Mr. Sudarsana Row begins his paper with a comparison between Justice Ranade and Swami Vivekananda. "Both were men of keen intellectual perception, broad universal sympathies, and strong iron purpose.....Both had unbounded love for their motherland—a love that was too deep to allow them to use a harsh word towards her, had immense hope of her potential possibilities that would never allow them to despair of her future..... To both Social Reform meant social advancement on national lines without prejudice to those essential virtues for which the people have been justly famous from time immemorial." These are qualifications which every would-be reformer should aspire to possess.

Mr. Ramanujachariar's paper on "The Aims of Hindu Social Life" explains the meaning of Social Reform on 'national lines.' He says: "The ancient Indian philosophers, we believe, had, by their remarkable intuition, clearly grasped the nature of man and his destiny as well as of his relation to society. They recognised in man two aspects, one spiritual and permanent, and the other temporal and accidental. In his superior aspect man is a distinct being apart from the society

of which, as a physical organism, he forms a part; and he has therefore an end of his own to live for. That end is the realisation of his highest spiritual nature and all its possibilities; and his physical embodiment is useful to him only in so far as it conduces to that end. But as it is in the midst of society that he has to realise his spiritual self, he, in common with his fellows, has another end to realise and work for. The individual aim of life is the soul's salvation, and the communal aim is naturally to fit society for the free and easy realisation of that individual aim. That is the social ideal—the creation of a perfect state of society in which it is best possible for each man to realise the true end of his being.....Whatever institution in our social system is directly or indirectly injurious to the maintenance of our national ideal must be fought against and done away with. Whatever institution is likely to be conducive to that end, but has become corrupt, must be purified and revived in strength; and whatever we mean to adopt from extraneous sources must be such as do not conflict with but are directly or indirectly helpful to the realisation of the national ideal."

Judged from the stand-point of religion as the national ideal, India was never degraded. There was no period of her national life when she lacked spiritual giants. "Slowly, very slowly, India took the three steps of national decay; first, the spiritual; secondly, the intellectual; and thirdly, the material," says Mrs. Besant (p. 36). We entirely disagree. From the Vedic times till now, there has been, we are convinced, a steady organic growth of her spiritual life, increasing in intensity and extensiveness, in richness and complexity, sage after sage infusing new vigour in new ways into it. Her want of material prosperity to-day is due not to any spiritual decay, but because she did not adequately care for it in the past. Signs are evident that she is trying to rectify her

mistake. But that material prosperity is to be achieved not by giving up spirituality—which is not only undesirable, but impossible in India—but by rising to the realisation that life and work in every phase is co-ordinated to the spiritual. Do we not read in the Upanishads “Everything of the universe is to be covered with the Lord Himself”?

To return to Mr. Row's paper. ‘East is East and West is West’ said Kipling. The truth of this statement, Mr. Row thinks, is nowhere better exemplified than in the Western and the Eastern processes of the progress of civilization. The whole history of Western civilization is an illustration of the principles of natural selection and the survival of the fittest, is a history of “competition for life and power—of foreign conquests, of subjugation of weaker nations, and of the assertion of the superior civilization of the conquering nation.” India has from the beginning been a veritable ethnological museum. The principle followed by the Aryans in their relations with other races was not that of competition and natural selection, but ‘conciliatory co-ordination.’ “‘Live and let live’ has been our policy all along. In the struggle for existence, the weaker have not been allowed to ‘go to the wall’ as they say, but have been given a place and a rank in the social polity and every possibility for kindly help and gradual elevation was extended to them.” And the outcome was the *Varnāshramāchāra*—the so-called caste, dividing the population into different groups based on the innate qualities of the people and the professions they followed in life. The names, Brahmana, Kshatriya &c., simply represented a status of the community. This nobly conceived institution has lost its essential virtues and its latent defects have now fully asserted themselves. It has become a puzzling problem and, to Mr. Row no solution seems possible. But he is hopeful when he sees that “people who occupied till

now a lower status are assuming honourable names and are claiming the prestige and privilege of the higher castes. The Vaisyas of the Kistna district are asserting their equal claims with the Brahmins to the performance of Vedic rituals and the privilege of Vedic formula. The goldsmith class have quite made up their minds not to have anything to do with their old deserted name of *Kamsala*, and have formed a sincere attachment to their new name of *Visva-Brahmanas*. The fishermen caste are following suit and have put on the honourable designation of *Agnikula Kshatriyas*.” We quote Swami Vivekananda's words indicating the full significance of these movements:—

“The law of caste in every other country takes the individual man or woman as the sufficient unit. Wealth, power, intellect or beauty suffices for the individual to leave the status of birth and scramble up to anywhere one can.

Here the unit is all the members of a caste-community.

Here too, one has every chance of rising from a low caste to a higher or the highest: only, in this birth-land of Altruism, one is compelled to take his whole caste along with him.

You cannot here, on account of your wealth, power, or any other merit, leave your fellows behind and make common cause with your superiors—deprive those, who helped in your acquiring the excellence, of any benefit therefrom and give them in return only contempt. If you want to rise to a higher caste in India, you have to elevate all your caste first, and then there is nothing in your onward path to hold you back.

This is the Indian method of fusion, and this has been going on from time immemorial.” (*Prabuddha Bharata*, Jany. 1901, p. 12).

Castes, understood in the sense of groups determined by the aptitude of different people for different professions in life, are natural

and good. The multiplication of such castes, far from being injurious, is conducive to the well-being of a nation, as they serve to multiply arts and industries. But death lurks in the privileges which arise in connection with them. Elimination of privileges, or, in other words, equalization of rights is the work before us. Our aim should therefore be not to destroy caste, but the destruction of the privileges. And the weapon is, we repeat, the diffusion of knowledge among the people at large. "Ignorance, ignorance, and for a third time, ignorance is the root evil—the prime source of all misery and suffering," observes Mr. Row rightly. "That is the great giant with which we have to grapple, and God helping, victory shall be ours if we only work hard and true."

"Intimately connected with the caste question is the question of outcastes. Our treatment of the Pariahs and other outcastes is anything but creditable to us. It is a serious blot on our civilisation and a standing libel on our vaunted spirituality. If we do not wake up to a sense of our duty to these down-trodden men, and do reparation, however tardy, for our past folly and injustice, Nemesis is sure to overtake us if it has not already done so in a measure. The missionary is on the alert; our loss is his gain, our folly is his opportunity."

Though we have not been able to notice the other papers, we have found in them instructive and wise thoughts that will be of great use to the careful reader. The book has supplied a desideratum of the hour. We conclude this rather lengthy review with the pregnant remarks of Sir T. Madhava Row:

"It is the truth that society, as it is, is the product far more of *natural evolution* than of *Brahman manufacture*; that the *thorns* which accompany the *rose* are the product far more of natural evolution than of the gardener's manufacture. There is a *true* conclusion about society. There is a *false* conclusion about the

same. It is desirable that every reformer should know these conclusions and should know the difference between them. The true conclusion about society is that it is the product of natural evolution during very long periods of time. The false conclusion about society is that it is the product of the manufacture of such men as Manu, Sankaracharya and other great law-givers and teachers. Obviously, there is a great difference between the two conclusions. Those that believe in natural evolution will not be in a great hurry to make large alterations in society. On the other hand, those that believe in Brahman manufacture will clamour and press for large alterations in society by means of political and other artificial agencies."

WE have been favoured with the fifth annual report of the Central Hindu College, Benares (Oct. 1902 to Sept. 1903). During the year under report the Syndicate of the Allahabad University sanctioned the opening of the B. A. class in the college and the first third year class was accordingly opened in August. The total number of students on the rolls on the 30th September 1903 was 332, as against 253 of the preceding year. The results of the Entrance, the School Final and the High School examinations are good; those of the Intermediate are not so satisfactory, 15 students having passed out of 42 who appeared in it. As was mentioned in last year's report, science has been taught in the lower classes, the Vth and the VIth, in the form of object-lessons. The number of regular teams of foot-ball, cricket and hockey was the same as in the last year, viz., 3, 2 and 2 respectively. In connection with the care-taking of the physique of the students, the Committee decided to extend the operation of their rule against early marriage by resolving that from the first of March 1904, married boys would be admitted into the IXth and the Entrance classes only on pay-

ment of double the usual admission and tuition fees. The total number of volumes in the library stood at 6322 at the end of the year. Nearly eight hundred rupees worth of apparatus and a thousand rupees worth of machines for fretwork and sawing, lathes and such other technical appliances were added to the apparatus stock by purchase during the year. There were 44 boarders in the beginning and 54 at the end of the year, as against 29 and 39 of the previous year. The closing balance is Rs. 40,833, as against Rs. 17,673-10-5 of the preceding year. The aim of the Board of Trustees of the college, observed the President, was "not merely to turn out brilliant graduates, but to send out men who were loyal to their faith, lovers of their country, pure in their lives, strong in their bodies, men fit to be citizens of a great land, worthy to take part in the fashioning of the civilisation of the future." No aim could be nobler. May all Divine blessings always be with the Board to guide them along the right path.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES

THE only two animals whose brain is heavier than that of a man are the whale and the elephant.

FLYING fish do not usually rise more than 3ft. above the sea, but they have been known to fall on a deck as much as 20ft. above the water.

OFFICIAL statistics show that there are 17,000,000 children in Russia between the ages of six and fourteen receiving absolutely no education.

THE Trans-Atlantic liners are to have daily newspapers published on board for the use of passengers. Marconigrams will play an important part in this interesting innovation.

INDIA has a greater variety of plants than any other country in the world, having 15,000 native species; while the flora of the entire continent of Europe only embraces about 10,000.

THE greatest depth of the ocean as yet known is eight and three-quarter miles. This distance was measured between the Island of Tristan d'Acunha and the mouth of the Rio de la Plata.

THE red sand found at Cape Comorin has a great commercial value. Messrs. Parry and Co., of Madras, collect and ship it to London, where it is used as a polishing paste. It is valued at 40 rupees per ton.

AT a cost of one shilling Japanese doctors can dress the wounds of 500 men. They use a finely powdered charcoal obtained by the slow combustion of straw in closed furnaces. Sachets filled with it are applied to the wounds, and its antiseptic and absorbent qualities generally effect a rapid cure.

THE world's highest monument is in the city of Washington, and to the memory of the 'Father of the country' after whom the city is named. The gigantic monument is 555ft. high, 55ft. square at the base, and contains 18,000 blocks of marble 2ft. thick. In the interior are a lift and fifty flights of stairs, eighteen steps each.

THE wonders of botany are apparently inexhaustible. One of the most remarkable specimens is the Mexican maguey tree, which furnishes a needle and thread all ready for use. At the tip of each dark green leaf is a slender thorn needle that must be carefully drawn from its sheath; at the same time it slowly unwinds the thread, a strong, smooth fibre attached to the needle and capable of being drawn out to a great length.

THE sovereign who reigns over the smallest monarchy in the world is the King of the Cocos, a group of islands near Sumatra. These islands were discovered about 300 years ago by the captain of the *Keeling*, but were comparatively little known till 1825. When Mr. Ross, an Englishman, visited them he was struck by their beauty, and took up his abode there. It is his grandson, Mr. George Ross, who now holds sway over Cocos.

MILLIONS of eggs are destroyed in England every year simply in order to keep the prices up. When the eggs are coming in too fast from abroad and a glut in the market is threatened, it is the practice to break open case after case and deliberately smash the contents with a stick. Thousands of cases, too, are thrown overboard at sea; and one way or another it is no uncommon thing for half a million foreign eggs to be destroyed in a week.

CAPTAIN Dink Botts, of Atlanta, U. S. A., has invented a motor car that is propelled by wings of enormous size, modelled after those of a goose. The spectacle of the bird motor-car flying through the streets of Atlanta attracts much attention. It has capsized several times, and once the starboard wing refused to act while the port wing kept revolving. The result was that the car swerved round and sailed through the window of a greengrocer's shop.

WE acknowledge with thanks three English wall-maps of India, Asia and the World in Hemispheres, presented to our library, especially for the use of the local hill boys, by Mr. S. B. Chatterji, F. R. G. S. (London) of Calcutta. The maps are constructed and compiled by Mr. Chatterji and are well executed. We do not know of any other purely Indian enterprise in the same direction. Mr. Chatterji deserves every encouragement from all Indian educational bodies. His

address is New School Book Press, 8 Dixon's Lane, Calcutta.

CHINA is the great slave country of the world. Of a population of 400,000,000 there are slaves to the number of 10,000,000. Every family of means keeps its girl slaves, and a man's position is usually gauged by the number he keeps. At any age from three to fifteen girls are sold, seven or eight being the age at which most change hands. The girls are purchased to do house work, it being cheaper to buy than to hire. Slaves vary in price; £2 is about the average, but much depends on the girl's appearance. A good-looking girl will fetch £4 or even £8.

THE Kah-gyur, or Tibetan Bible, consists of 108 volumes of 1,000 pages each, containing 1,083 separate books. Each of the volumes weighs 10lb., and forms a package 26in. long, 8in. broad, and 8in. deep. This Bible requires a dozen yaks for its transport, and the carved wooden blocks from which it is printed need rows of houses, like a city, for their storage. A tribe of Mongols paid 7,000 oxen for a copy of this Bible. In addition to the Bible there are 225 volumes of commentaries, which are necessary for its understanding. There is also a large collection of revelations which supplement the Bible.

THE best timekeeper in the world is said to be the electric clock in the basement of the Berlin Observatory, which was installed by Professor Foerster in 1865. It is enclosed in an air-tight glass cylinder, and has frequently run for periods of two or three months with an average daily deviation of only fifty-one-thousandths of a second. Astronomers are making efforts to improve even upon this, and to secure ideal conditions for the clock by keeping it not only in an air-tight case, but in an underground vault, where neither changes of temperature nor of barometric pressure shall ever affect it.

EXCELLENT authorities agree that in a thunderstorm the middle of a room is much the safest place in a house. A carpeted floor, or one covered by a thick rug, is better to stand on than bare wood. It is well to keep away from chimneys and out of cellars. In the open air tall trees are dangerous. A person sheltered under a low tree or shrub 3ft. or 4ft. from a large and lofty tree is quite safe. If lightning strikes in the immediate vicinity it will hit the high tree, as a rule, with few exceptions. Water is a very good conductor, and it is well to avoid the banks of streams in a violent thunderstorm.

A REMARKABLE feat in quarrying was recently accomplished at Rubislaw quarries, Aberdeen, Scotland, where the workmen used one of the commonest elements of nature for blasting. A large stone had been drilled ready for splitting, when the thought struck the foreman that the severe frost which prevailed might be utilized. Water was poured into each of the drill-holes, and it was found after a couple of days that the block of granite had completely burst open. An idea of the immense power of the frost will be gathered when it is stated that the stone thus detached measures 12 feet by 5 feet, and has a weight of about six tons.

WHEN a rich and important Chinaman dies, his funeral is conducted with much pomp and splendour. His friends and relations, instead of sending wreaths, send innumerable banners. These are made of white silk, with inscriptions beautifully worked in black velvet and express the sender's good wishes to the deceased himself or to the members of his family for many generations. On the day of the funeral these banners are carried by hired men, who are all dressed alike for the occasion. After the funeral, which lasts several hours at the cemetery, is over, the banners are all brought back, and eventually grace the rooms of the late Chinaman's house.

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